

# **Recommended Practice for Security & Emergency Management Aspects of Special Event Service**

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**Abstract:** This Recommended Practice covers the security and emergency management aspects of special event services.

**Keywords:** Special events

## **Introduction**

(This introduction is not a part of APTA-RP-SEM-004-08, *Recommended Practice Security & Emergency Management Aspects of Special Event Services*.)

This Recommended Practice for Recommended Practice for Security & Emergency Management Aspects of Special Event Services, represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies (transit systems), manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any standards, practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of transit systems' operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this Recommended Practice. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the practices implemented by transit systems may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document.

The purpose of an APTA Recommended Practice is to ensure that each transit system achieves a high level of safety for passengers, employees and the public. APTA Transit Safety & Security Recommended Practices represent an industry consensus of acceptable safety practices that should be used by a transit system. However, APTA recognizes that some transit systems have unique aspects of their operating environment, which when combined with levels of service that must be provided, may make strict compliance with every provision of an APTA Transit Safety & Security Recommended Practice impossible.

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## 1. Overview

Special events can affect transit agency operations in myriad ways. It is important for a transit agency to assess special event activities in advance to identify security and emergency management issues and contingencies. In some areas, municipalities strongly encourage event participants to utilize available transit system resources instead of personal automobiles. Special events and the transit systems used to get to them can also provide a potential high-exposure and target-rich opportunity for individuals or groups intent on committing criminal and/or terrorist acts. Effective coordination and communication between event sponsors, emergency management agencies and transit agencies is critical to ensuring that events run smoothly and that contingencies are in place for potential major incidents.

### 1.1 Scope

This document provides security and emergency management guidance to transit agencies for planned special events affecting their service areas.

### 1.2 Purpose

This document is meant to provide a recommended practice to transit agencies for evaluating the potential effect of special events on their systems, identifying potential major incidents or unusual problems that could occur or be created by special events, and for coordinating contingency plans with event sponsors and emergency management agencies.

## 2. References

Federal Emergency Management Agency Emergency Management Institute, *IS-15.A – Special Events Contingency Planning for Public Safety Agencies*. a five hour independent study web-based training course Available at <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/IS15a.asp>

Goodwill, Jay, and Ann Joslin, *Special Event Transportation Service Planning and Operations Strategies for Transit*, National Center for Transit Research (NCTR) Center for Urban Transportation Research, Report# BD459-09 / NCTR 576-09, University of Florida, March 2006. Available at <http://www.nctr.usf.edu/pdf/576-09.pdf>

Latoski, Steven, et al., *Managing Travel for Planned Special Events*, U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration, Report #FHWA-OP-04-010, Washington D.C., September 2003. Available at [http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/program\\_areas/sp-events-mgmt/handbook/index.htm](http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/program_areas/sp-events-mgmt/handbook/index.htm)

### 3. Definitions, abbreviations and acronyms

#### 3.1 Definitions

**3.1.1 planned special event:** A public activity, with a scheduled time and location, that may impact normal transportation system operations as a result of increased travel demand and/or reduced capacity attributed to event staging. Planned special events include sporting events, concerts, festivals and conventions occurring at permanent multi-use venues (arenas, stadiums, racetracks, fairgrounds, amphitheaters, convention centers, etc.). They also include less frequent public events such as parades, political rallies, fireworks displays, bicycle races, sporting games, motorcycle rallies, seasonal festivals and milestone celebrations at temporary venues. The term “planned special event” is used to describe these activities because of their known locations, scheduled times of occurrence and associated operating characteristics.

#### 3.2 Abbreviations and acronyms

ICS      Incident Command System

### 4. Pre-planning for special events

Having a systematic pre-planning process for special events benefits transit agencies by creating methodologies for coordinating with other event stakeholders. It also allows transit agencies to develop and document best practices and lessons learned for different types of events. This program approach is more effective than ad hoc event planning and allows for more comprehensive and proactive involvement of transit agencies in the overall event planning process. Transit agencies should be concerned with how events may require deviations from normal service patterns, how they may require transit security attention and what type of contingency plans should be in place.

Keys to successful management of planned special events:

- Achieve early, constant input, partnership and participation of involved agencies.
- Predict event-generated travel impacts on both a local and a regional level.
- Develop an integrated transportation management plan that can accommodate a range of traffic/transit demands and other contingencies.
- Ensure successful traffic/transit management plan implementation.

- Deploy a well-organized traffic/transit management team equipped with the ability to communicate seamlessly between agencies.
- Conduct continuous traffic/transit monitoring on the day of the event and maintain protocol for modifying the traffic/transit management plan to accommodate real-time traffic/transit conditions.
- Transfer event management successes into daily applications, and translate lessons learned into future event planning and operational needs.

#### **4.1 Special event dialogue**

Transit agencies should develop routine communications with agencies and groups (e.g., police, government community affairs offices, event permit offices, major venues, etc.) involved in event planning in order to become aware of special events in a timely manner. It is important that transit agencies be considered a primary stakeholder for special events that require any significant transit system involvement.

#### **4.2 Special event record**

Transit agencies should maintain a central record of past special events. Special events should be tracked on a calendar so they can be managed as early as is practical. The record should contain sufficient information to enhance planning for future events that are recurring, similar in type or at a repeatedly used venue. Information in the record for each event should minimally include the following:

- Name of event and sponsoring group
- Nature of the event
- Key contact information for involved groups and agencies
- Past history of the event or others involving this location or organization, including problems and conditions encountered
- Time frame of the event: days of the week, dates and hours
- Whether or not other area events (related or not) are occurring during the same time frame and whether the transit plan is separate or integrated between events
- Geographic area of event
- Size and demographics of crowd expected to attend event and number expected to use the transit system
- Size and location of event facility
- Availability of alcohol

- Types of transit system modalities involved (rail, bus, etc.).
- Expected use of, or disruption to, the transit system
- Adjustments made to rail or bus routes and schedules
- Effect on transit system, including secondary locations, such as a transit hub that is remote from the event but likely to be inundated with passengers going to and from the event
- Dedicated transit agency personnel required for the event
- General security concerns about the event and specific transit-related security issues
- Outside security personnel utilized in support of the transit function, such as police patrols or crowd control at transit points
- Transit related communication to the public (posted signage, public address messages, etc.)

### **4.3 Pre-event conferrals**

For specific planned special events, coordinate with stakeholders to determine the effect the event will have on the transit system. Some questions to consider include the following:

- Will the event require changes to bus routes?
- Will the event require additional buses?
- Will the event require temporary bus stop locations?
- Will personal vehicle traffic affect bus routes?
- Will the event require additional rail service?
- Should some buses or trains be held in reserve for contingencies?
- Will event participants be arriving and leaving all at once, or will it be a continuous flow in and out?
- Will crowd control measures be required at transit system boarding locations and stations?
- Are elevated security measures required for the transit system?

- Will screening of vehicles, transit employees and/or passengers be required either at the venue or at transit system locations?
- Are there security restricted zones affecting the movement of transit vehicles or passengers?
- What event risk factors may be present (e.g., overcrowding, violence, demonstrations, fan celebration, etc.)?
- Are passenger problems anticipated (e.g., alcohol involvement, rowdy teenagers, etc.)?
- At what level is ICS being deployed, and how will the transit system be plugged into it?
- How do event contingency plans interact with the transit system?

#### **4.4 Incident Command System and communications**

Based on the size and nature of the event, transit agencies should have the appropriate level of ICS trained personnel involved, to either participate in or coordinate with the overall event ICS. There should always be a communication link to the event incident command post. In addition:

- Potential scaling up of the event ICS and any related transit agency involvement should be considered in advance.
- Specific key personnel should be identified in advance and be aware of their duties in the event of a scaling up of ICS in response to an incident at the special event.
- A comprehensive list of key event contact information for during the event should be developed, including positions, names, locations, telephones e-mail addresses, etc.
- Consideration should be given to radio interoperability issues, if necessary to include providing radios to key communication liaisons of outside agencies.

#### **4.5 Pre-event site survey**

Pre-planning activities should include a survey of the event site area and associated transit locations likely to be affected. Where useful, maps should be utilized and distributed to transit agency employees involved in the event. Some issues to consider include the following:

- The physical relationship of the event site to passenger drop-off and boarding locations and stations



- Any need to have law enforcement involved in restricting traffic or pedestrian flow to accommodate transit system vehicles and passengers
- If crowd surges by passengers exiting the event are anticipated, where they should be queued and who will be directing them
- If security screening (or screening for alcohol possession) of transit vehicles, employees and passengers is anticipated, where it will occur and who does it
- If transit vehicles will be laid up or staged during the event, whether those locations require security
- Whether there are any specific locations where transit signage directing passengers should be placed
- If event contingency plans include measures for mass evacuation, gross decontamination, etc., what direction and to what locations people are to be routed

#### **4.6 Event plan**

An event plan should be prepared that articulates the involvement of the transit agency and provides an overall explanation of the event. In particular:

- If necessary, function-specific duties should be outlined for agency sub-departments involved in the event.
- Both event stakeholders and agency personnel should be made aware of the plan.
- Security sensitive plan information should be restricted to a need-to-know basis.
- Contingency aspects of the plan should be outlined, such as use of the transit system to evacuate people or deploy outside first responders from other locations to an event incident or the impact of extreme weather conditions on the event and transit system.
- Any related transit emergency management plans should be referenced, such as the transit agency response to a major transit incident (derailment, explosion, chemical release, etc.).
- If necessary, the plan should outline any specific transit familiarization training that other agency personnel will be attending.

## **5. Special event operations**

Transit agency managers involved in a special event should do the following:

- Maintain communications with the event command post, key agency liaisons and transit agency personnel in the field.
- Continuously assess conditions affecting transit system functions (traffic flow, passenger volume, etc.).
- Notify the event command post regarding transit system disruptions that may affect event participants.
- Notify the event command post regarding any security incidents occurring on transit system property or vehicles.
- If spectators are likely to leave the event all at once, determine the time of any anticipated crowd surge toward the transit system and ensure that the necessary personnel are in place.

## **6. Post-event analysis**

Analyzing event plans subsequent to the special event is important for future planning purposes. This should not be a finger-pointing exercise (or the process will not succeed), but one geared toward identifying areas that need improvement for subsequent planning. Specifically:

- Immediately after the event, assess plan success and shortfalls with transit system personnel assigned to the event. Information should be solicited from multiple level, not just management and supervision.
- If the event command post will be running a post-event critique session, participate.
- Participate in any subsequent post-event meetings.
- Prepare a written critique of the transit system event plan, making any necessary specific recommendations for improving the plan for future events.
- Keep all recorded documentation readily accessible in a central file.